

TRICARE Benefits Improved Significantly For Reservists

Department of Defense News Service



The National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal 2005, recently signed by the President, improves significantly the overall health benefits available to guardsmen, reservists and their families and makes permanent several of the TRICARE benefits authorized “temporarily” under defense legislation last year while extending secretarial authorization for others.

“Our reservists and guardsmen who are called to duty and their families deserve these great new benefits for their service to their country,” said Dr. William Winkenwerder Jr., assistant secretary of defense for health affairs. “We welcome these new TRICARE provisions as a means to improve active and reserve component force readiness and to enhance family member access to care.”

For reserve component members with delayed effective date orders to serve on active duty in support of a contingency operation for more than 30 days, the new legislation permanently authorizes TRICARE eligibility for up to 90 days prior to member’s activation date for eligible members and their families. It also makes permanent a 180-day transitional TRICARE health benefit after deactivation for Transitional Assistance Management Program (TAMP) eligible members and their families. Members must also now receive a comprehensive physical examination prior to separating from active duty service.

The legislation also authorizes waiv-

er of the TRICARE standard and extra deductibles of reserve component family members for members ordered to active duty for more than 30 days and authorizes TRICARE to pay nonparticipating providers up to 115 percent of the TRICARE maximum allowable charge, which enhances continuity of care for these family members with their civilian providers. In order to ensure seamless implementation of these provisions, TRICARE has extended the TRICARE Reserve Family Demonstration Project through Oct. 31, 2005. The demonstration, which began on Sept. 14, 2001, was due to end Nov. 1, 2004.

Members of the reserve component called after Sept. 11, 2001, to serve for more than 30 days in support of a contingency operation, who served or will continuously serve for 90 or more days, are now given the opportunity to purchase TRICARE standard healthcare coverage for themselves and their family members after they demobilize. The member must sign an agreement to continue serving for a period of one year or more in the selected reserve after their active duty ends. For every 90 days of consecutive active duty service, the member and family member may purchase one year of TRICARE standard coverage for the same period they commit to serve in the selected reserves. Members will be able to pur-

chase the new TRICARE standard coverage on a self-only or self and family basis. The TRICARE standard coverage under this program will begin once the member’s eligibility for 180 days of transitional TRICARE coverage under the TAMP program ends. Members who served on active duty in support of a contingency operation for 90 days or more on or after Sept. 11, 2001, and were released from active duty before Oct. 28, 2004, or within 180 days of that date, may enter into an agreement to serve continuously in the selected reserve for a period of one or more years and begin participation in this program at that time. These members must enter

into this agreement to serve in the selected reserve within one year of Oct. 28, 2004.

Congress requires implementation of the new TRICARE standard enrollment program by April 26, 2005. Winkenwerder stated, “We have already begun working on these provisions and will implement them on time.”

Additional information on the new permanent TRICARE provisions

to include start dates, benefits and requirements under each of the new permanent provisions will be posted on the TRICARE web site at www.tricare.osd.mil and the reserve affairs Web site at www.defenselink.mil/ra as soon as each is ready to begin.



WIC Overseas Available at 44 Sites Around Europe to Serve You

LaMont Olsen

WIC Europe Theater Liaison

In December 2004, the 44th WIC Overseas office opened in Buedingen, Germany. This office was opened so the Buedingen community would not have to drive all the way to Hanau for WIC Overseas services. The opening of this new office reflects a commitment to establish WIC Overseas offices in convenient locations at major military population centers in Europe. Whether your family lives near Buedingen, Rota, Naples, or RAF Mildenhall, there should be a WIC Overseas office nearby.

The WIC Overseas program assists families with improving the diets of pregnant, postpartum and breast feeding women as well as infants and children. In addition to providing supplemental nutritious foods, the program focuses on educating mothers and fathers on proper nutrition for themselves, their babies and young children. Physical activity is also promoted as an important part of a healthy lifestyle. The WIC Overseas office can also make referrals to other community and health care professionals.

In order to participate in the WIC Overseas program, the family must meet certain criteria. Fortunately, this can be as simple as a phone call as most WIC Overseas offices can do a simple screen for eligibility by asking just a few questions. Contact your local office by phone or stop by to schedule an appointment to determine your eligibility.

Once enrolled, you will generally return for additional consultation with the nutrition counselor every three months. You will also receive drafts, similar to a coupon-like check that can be redeemed at the Commissary or NEXMarts for specific nutritious foods. Some examples of foods that you will receive

are infant and adult cereal, beans, fruit juice, eggs, milk, cheese and possibly infant formula. Foods that are available to WIC Overseas participants are clearly identified in a shopping guide that is given to each participant at their first appointment. The Commissary and NEXMart also identify WIC approved foods with orange WIC labels that are visible on the store shelves. WIC Overseas drafts can be redeemed at all overseas Commissaries and NEXMarts. They may not be redeemed at Main Exchanges, Mini-Marts, Gas Station convenience stores or Commissaries and NEXMarts located in the United States.

The DoD WIC Overseas program is currently funded to ensure that every family who meets eligibility criteria is provided WIC Overseas services. Families who are receiving WIC while assigned in the United States may ask that their eligibility be transferred to the WIC Overseas program upon their reassignment. Prior to departing the U.S., the family should request a Verification of Certification (VOC) which will allow them to enter the WIC

Overseas program for the remainder of their certification period. This will allow the family to simply transfer into the WIC Overseas program without completing additional certification paperwork. Likewise, a family departing the European theater should request a VOC from the WIC Overseas office where they are enrolled to smooth the transition back to a stateside WIC program. Transfers within OCONUS will be handled in a similar fashion.

For more information on WIC Overseas, visit www.europe.tricare.osd.mil and select the "Beneficiary" button. You may also visit www.tricare.osd.mil/wic. To locate your nearest WIC Overseas office, call DSN 496-6328 or civilian (49)-(0)6302-67-6328.



TRICARE Dental Program Available To Meet Family Needs

Dr. George Schad
TRICARE Dental Plan Overseas



Over the past year, we have seen numerous deployments of active duty personnel from locations throughout Europe. These deployments often times include resources from our military medical and dental clinics. When this happens in conjunction with summer rotations and other manpower losses, we find that family member dental care in our military dental clinics sometimes has to be curtailed or temporarily postponed. Our clinics are not always able to meet the needs of the family members and still maintain active duty personnel in top readiness condition for their deployments. Readiness of the troops is the primary responsibility for our military dental clinics. Therefore, specialty dental work and sometimes even exams and cleanings for family members have to be delayed.

During these times beneficiaries who belong to the TRICARE Dental Plan (TDP) can be referred to the host nation provider network to receive the care that they need. When this occurs, the dental clinic will provide the member with a Non-Availability and Referral Form (NARF) for the care that is needed. In addition they should provide the patient with a UCCI Claim Form, a list of host nation providers, and a handout that advises the patient how to use

the program and how to file a claim with UCCI.

The TDP was designed to augment the dental care that is given to family members in our military DTFs. During times of diminished manning or when deployments affect dental clinic capabilities the TDP is a great way to maintain your dental health while in an overseas location. All of the providers who are listed on our TRICARE Europe web site and at our local dental clinics have been visited by one of our active duty dentists. Our military dentists have checked over the local provider's practices and have assured themselves and the rest of us that the host nation providers are graduates of a valid dental school, are licensed in the country where they practice, speak English, sterilize instruments, and wear a mask and gloves when treating patients. In general, this means that the dentists we list are practicing a lot like a local dentist in the U.S. would practice and we therefore feel comfortable in sending our military family members to see these providers.

You may enroll in the TDP online or via the mail. Sponsors must enroll for a minimum of 12 months. E-mail UCCI at oconus@ucci.com or visit their website at www.ucci.com.

If mailing an enrollment (address is available online), you are asked to send a check or money order for the amount equal to **one month's premium** to UCCI with the application. If enrolling online, you will need to use a credit card to pay for the initial month's premium.

Register
Login
Forgot Password

Important Resources

- Policies and Benefits
- Reimbursement Rates
- Provider Resources
- Beneficiary Resources
- TMA's Notice of Security Practices
- Electronic Claims
- TRICARE for Life
- Toll-Free Numbers
- Map of Regions
- TRICARE Brochures
- Report Fraud and Abuse
- Glossary of Terms
- TRICARE Forms

Need Help?
Contact our friendly Customer Service staff

Welcome!

Wisconsin Physicians Service (WPS) is pleased to provide you with a comprehensive website for obtaining all the information you need on the TRICARE Program. WPS is proud to be partnered with Humana Military for TRICARE Overseas.

If you are a first time user of this site, [choose your username and get a password by registering with us!](#)

Beneficiary

- Determine eligibility for the TRICARE program
- Obtain up-to-date information on your out-of-pocket copayments and deductibles
- Check the status of claims and obtain duplicate Explanations of Benefits
- Update your address for mailing Explanations of Benefits
- Ask Customer Service a question in a secured online message environment
- Update what we have on file for your other health insurance

Provider

- Obtain eligibility, where to file a claim or out-of-pocket expense information
- Obtain information if the beneficiary has met their catastrophic cap or deductible
- Query claim status and duplicate Explanations of Benefits
- Submit claims online and receive an immediate response
- Ask Customer Service a question in a secured online message environment

Check the status of your claim at TRICARE4u.com

Social Security Numbers Help Dependents Avoid Health Care Access Problems

Troy Kitch

TRICARE Europe Public Affairs

If you are a TRICARE beneficiary with a dependent who does not have a Social Security number, TRICARE Europe officials recommend that you apply for one as soon as possible to ensure continued access to the Military Health System for your son or daughter.*

While all U.S. citizens need to get a Social Security number, there are cases of military children as old of five or six who still do not have one because parents never applied. If you do not take steps to get a Social Security Number for your dependent child, you may experience problems receiving care for your child at your military clinic or hospital.

TRICARE officials use Social Security numbers to verify eligibility in the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS), a database used by the DoD to manage sponsor and dependent information. When a dependent child is born, the military issues a temporary identification number* to serve as a 'place holder' in DEERS until a permanent Social Security number can be entered into the system.

This temporary number is only valid for a limited period of time (270 days), based on when your newborn's DEERS record is first accessed. For example, when you arrange the first appointment for your baby at a Military Treatment Facility, you then have 270 days from that point to update your child's DEERS record with a permanent Social Security number.

If you applied for a Social Security number and are nearing the 270-day mark and are still waiting, you may request a 90-day extension at your Personnel or DEERS office.

If you do not take steps to get a Social Security number for your child and you pass the allotted deadlines, you may experience delays and inconveniences when you try to arrange for care for your child at a military clinic or hospital.

Once you receive a new number from the Social Security Administration, visit the ID card-issuing facility (Personnel office) on your installation to update DEERS.

Of course, ensuring you and your dependents have

Did You Know That?



- Every year, SSA's Office of the Actuary does a study of the most popular names give to applicants who were born in the current year. For 2003, the top five most popular boys names were Jacob, Michael, Joshua, Matthew, Andrew, and Joseph. The top five most popular girls names were Emily, Emma, Madison, Hannah, and Olivia.

- In 1940, the life expectancy of a 65-year-old was 12½ years, today it's 17½ years.

- In 30 years, there will be nearly twice as many older Americans as today – from 36 million today to almost 74 million in 2034.

- In 2004, more than 47 million Americans will receive approximately \$492 billion in Social Security benefits.

- Social Security numbers were first issued in November 1936. To date, over 415 million different numbers have been issued.

courtesy of the Social Security Administration

unimpeded access to your TRICARE benefits is just one of many reasons that a Social Security Number is important. Visit the Social Security Administration online at www.ssa.gov for application details, as well as information about the Social Security system.

****This also applies to foreign national spouses. These individuals receive a temporary ID number when they first enroll with TRICARE and must update their records with a valid Foreign ID number or a U.S. Social Security Number as soon as possible. Contact your TRICARE Service Center for more information.***



The TRICARE Europe Compass is published quarterly by TRICARE Area Office - Europe, Unit 10310, APO AE 09136-0136.

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